

NEWSLETTERS

Subversives Revisited

"The Golden Age of subversion" is over, says Editor William F. Buckley Jr., and he almost seems to regret it. Gone are traitors of the magnitude of Alger Hiss, witnesses of the eloquence of Whittaker Chambers. Still, today's radical resurgence, thinks Buckley, has created a swarm of lesser subversives who bear close watching. To keep an eye on them, he has started a four-page newsletter, *Combat*, to be published twice a month.

Combat is staffed by noted anti-subversives left over from the Golden Age. Its editor is Theodore Lit, who used to work with the late Fulton Lewis Jr. and was senior editor of the Conservative Book Club. Research is handled by Ruth Matthews, widow of J. B. Matthews, the ex-fellow traveler who kept the House Un-American Activities Committee liberally supplied with names. Chief consultant is Eugene Lyons, a recently retired *Reader's Digest* senior editor who has written extensively on the Communist menace.

Nearly 8,000 people have paid \$24 for a year's subscription. In the first issue last week, a "*Combat Exclusive*" revealed that hippies had poured a "fortune in LSD into reservoirs" with the hope of turning on the Democratic Convention. But their plans fizzled out, said *Combat*, when the chlorinated water neutralized the LSD. An item more colorful than correct, since there are no reservoirs in Chicago, and the LSD would have had no effect anyway. *Combat* also found it significant that Eldridge Cleaver, a Black Panther who is the presidential candidate of the Peace and Freedom Party, was invited to lecture to a group of summer trainees at the Xerox Corp. Cleaver told his audience to "liberate" a Xerox machine or two for the Panthers. He looked forward, ultimately, he said to a "black finger on the nuclear trigger." Xerox executives endured the harangue in silence. Whispered a Negro trainee: "Nothing is too insulting for white liberals to take."

Too Many Powers. Earlier anti-subversive publications had the advantage of exposing a single, centrally directed conspiracy out of Moscow. Among to-

day's anarchic rebels, there are almost as many power centers as there are radicals. So *Combat's* attempts to link two or three people to oldtime Communism are not very imaginative. Columbia University's new acting president, Andrew Cordier, confided *Combat*, was "one of Otto Otepka's State Department security cases, also involved in the Bang-Jensen case." Even a reader with a long memory for such things is likely to be puzzled.*

Combat makes a stab or two at humor: But for the most part, *Combat* lacks the wit that is the distinguishing—and redeeming—feature of its parent publication, *National Review*. *Combat* makes its debut at a rather advantageous time, when right-wing and anti-Communist sentiment appears to be on the rise in the U.S. Even so; it seems a bit superfluous. Ideology of the right is amply available in the *Review*; news of the rampaging radicals is generously covered in the daily press. *Combat* will have to unearth a lot more interesting subversives to be worth \$24 a year.

* A Danish member of the U.N. staff, Povl Bang-Jensen burned a list of names of Hungarians who had given the U.N. information about Russian atrocities during the 1956 invasion. Later fired from his post for "misconduct," he was either murdered or driven to suicide in 1959.